



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Melling St. Wilfrid Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Lodge Lane, Melling, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2RE

Previous SIAMS grade: Satisfactory

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 1 April 2016

Date of last inspection: 11 July 2012

School's unique reference number: 119536

Headteacher: Jodie Lumb

Inspector's name and number: Anne B. Woodcock 445

School context

Melling St. Wilfrid is a very small voluntary aided school. It serves a rural community in and around Melling in North Lancashire. All 32 pupils are of White British heritage and they come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. None are known to be eligible for the pupil premium grant. Children are taught in two mixed-age classes. The school supports an average number of pupils with additional needs. Since September 2015, the school operates in collaboration with Tatham Fells Church of England Primary School. The headteacher, who was appointed as associate headteacher in September 2014, shares her time equally between both schools.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Melling St. Wilfrid Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

- Pupils' excellent behaviour and positive attitudes are clearly based on their understanding of the school's six core Christian values.
- The headteacher, ably supported by dedicated staff and governors, has secured the school's distinctive Christian character. This has impacted strongly on all aspects of school improvement.
- Positive relationships with the church and local community have a significant impact on the school's Christian character and on pupils' personal and spiritual development.
- The school's strong 'Christian family' ethos supports and nurtures pupils and their families.

Areas to improve

- Involve parents and visitors in the evaluation of collective worship to gain further insight into the impact it has on the school community.
- Extend pupils' understanding of diverse cultures and faiths in religious education (RE) by providing more first-hand experience using visits and visitors.
- Engage parents in church school self-evaluation so that they can contribute more fully to the school's Christian vision.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

The school's core Christian values of love, friendship, trust, forgiveness, humility and respect were chosen and agreed by all members of the school family. They impact strongly on all relationships. 'Our values are special because they hold the school together. We learn to trust, share and treat each other fairly,' explained a Year 5 child. Another added, 'Jesus gave us the values so we can live a good life as God wants us to do.' As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes are very positive. Pupils are eager, confident learners who strive to achieve the targets set for them. 'Our teachers are fair and always listen. They challenge and help us,' stated a Year 6 pupil. All pupils, including those with additional needs, make good progress from their starting points and standards of attainment are good. Individual needs are met within the mixed-age class groups, providing challenge and support within a calm, purposeful working atmosphere. Parents are confident that their children are nurtured within a distinctly Christian environment. 'There is unconditional positive regard for all children, so they develop amazing empathy and confidence,' commented one parent. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good. It is well-supported by a variety of experiences, including outdoor 'forest school' learning, which promote collaboration and inspire creativity. Vibrant displays of art, poetry and prayer reflect children's responses to their experiences. They show an appreciation of the natural world and have well-developed ideas about their responsibilities to conserve it. 'God gave us a beautiful world and we have to look after it,' stated a Year 4 child. RE and cross-curricular themes support pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity. Children talk confidently about global issues such as the refugee crisis and poverty. The school's involvement with the Global Learning Programme is having a very positive impact on children's understanding of different cultures and communities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Children's attitude to worship is very positive because they enjoy and value their worship experiences. Worship experiences are inclusive and affirming for pupils and adults. Collective worship is well-planned and delivered. Themes are based on Bible teaching, Christian values and the Christian year. Pupils participate willingly, singing joyfully and helping to act out stories or read. They develop a good knowledge of Bible stories. Pupils talk confidently about the events in Jesus' life celebrated at Christmas and Easter. They link what they learn about Christian values to their own lives. A Year 6 pupil explained, 'Jesus told stories to teach people how to live better lives and show us the kingdom of God.' He went on to say, 'We try to follow the values and show compassion and forgiveness.' Pupils' understand God as the creator. Some recounted, 'God created the world. He is forgiving and will never let us down.' However, although they understand God as Father and Jesus as Son, their understanding of the Holy Spirit is at an early stage. Children know about Anglican practices, such as the use of liturgical colours. They are familiar with traditional prayers and graces. Time is given for reflection and prayer. Children have a growing ability to write and use their own prayers. Many of their prayers are kept in special books for use in worship and at other times. Pupils' roles in planning and leading collective worship has developed significantly. Small, mixed-age groups plan and deliver weekly worship. Class-led worship provides the opportunity for parents to share in their children's work and worship. Links with the church support pupils' spiritual journey. The church is used for special services at festival times. These are valued and well-attended by parents and members of the local community. The vicar leads worship regularly in school and members of other local faith groups also lead occasional worship. This provides children with experience of different styles of Christian worship. Worship is monitored by foundation governors and evaluated by staff and pupils. However, the school correctly recognises that evaluations may be improved by seeking the views of other members of the school community, such as parents and visitors.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Children enjoy RE saying, 'It is fun because we get to do lots of different activities and learn about God and what people believe.' Lessons are well-planned, meeting the needs of learners within the mixed-age classes. The enquiry-based approach promotes active learning. Children use art, drama and role play to express their developing ideas. They are increasingly reflective learners who express their beliefs openly within an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. A good balance is achieved between learning about and learning from religion. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and the standards achieved are in line with those achieved in other core subjects. Effective use is made of a range of assessment processes to track pupil progress and inform future learning. Marking identifies next steps and shows children how to improve their work. Class RE scrapbooks and pupils' work books reflect the high standard and range of work produced. Displays of pupil work, such as those related to Easter, demonstrate pupil's creative and personal responses. RE contributes positively to pupils' SMSC development. They know key facts about religions such as Judaism and recognise that they need to know about and respect the beliefs of others. Older pupils can make links between Judaism and Christianity by, for example, linking the celebration of Passover to the Last Supper. Themes are extended across the curriculum. For example, Key Stage 2 children used features of Islamic art in a maths lesson on angles. However, at present pupils do not have experience of meeting people from other faiths or visiting their places of worship. RE is effectively led and managed. The significant changes made to address the issues from the last inspection have been monitored and evaluated by governors and staff. The impact can be seen in improved standards and better rates of progress.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

All aspects of school improvement are founded on shared Christian values. The headteacher and governors ensure that staff and pupils are fully engaged in reviews of the mission statement and other key policies. The headteacher's strong Christian vision is clearly expressed and can be seen in the school's distinctive Christian environment. The impact of changes made since 2014 can be seen in all aspects of teaching and learning and in improving standards of achievement and pupil progress. Parents recognise that the changes are having an impact. They explain, 'They cater for each child's academic needs and emotional safety and wellbeing, so our children thrive. The school is a life-line for my family.' The role of governors has been strengthened. Governors monitor the work of the school through visits, observations and discussions so they are well-informed. Feedback informs self-evaluation and church school issues are prioritised within whole school improvement planning. However, the school recognises that parents need to be more fully involved in the church school self-evaluation process. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed. However, as some of the changes are quite recent, the impact of initiatives is yet to be fully assessed. Governors have secured good leadership for RE and collective worship. Provision for both areas meet statutory requirements. Both are well-supported and resourced and they make a very significant contribution to the school's Christian character. The collaboration with Tatham Fells School is having a very positive impact on school governance, leadership and curriculum development. Governors and staff train and work together. As a result, strategic planning is good and future leaders of church schools are being nurtured. Effective use is made of partnerships with other church schools and the diocese. Links with the church and local community are good and mutually supportive. Children have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of local and national issues. They take pride in their fundraising achievements, saying that everyone can do something to help others.